WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A message filtering circuit used in a distributed control system in which a plurality of nodes are connected to a transmission line, each node controlling components in this node and transmitting messages to other nodes, said message filtering circuit comprising:

a message storing part for taking-in and storing each of said messages transmitted on said transmission line, each of said messages including an identifier indicating a message-sending node and an identifier indicating a message-receiving node or non-designation of a message-receiving node;

a registration part for registering data of message-receiving conditions in advance;

at least one comparison part for comparing said identifiers of said condition-identifying portions with said data of message-receiving conditions registered in said registration part; and

at least one received-message storing part for storing a taken-in message according to results of said comparison-processing performed in said at least one comparison part and for sending said stored message to an external circuit.

2.   A message filtering circuit according to claim 1, wherein a digital signal processor is used for said comparison part.

3.   A message filtering circuit according to claim 1, wherein a programmable logic circuit is used for said comparison part.